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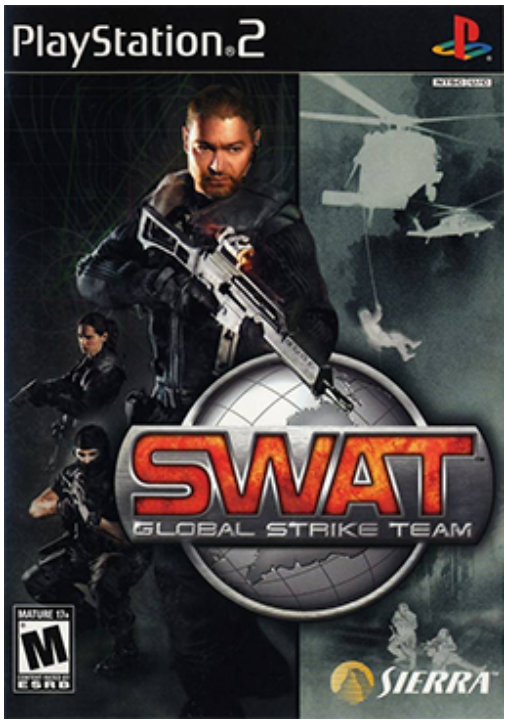
SWAT: Global Strike Team

SWAT: Global Strike Team is a 2003 tactical shooter video game developed by Argonaut Games and published by Vivendi Universal Games for the PlayStation 2 and Xbox. It featured a new game engine developed by Argonaut developed to push the lighting capabilities of the Xbox[4] and was the first *SWAT* game to ship on console systems. The game was inspired by the strategic elements of *SWAT 3* with the instantly accessible arcade action of the *Virtua Cop* series.[5]

SWAT: Global Strike Team received mixed reviews and was compared unfavorably to contemporary tactical shooters such as *Tom Clancy's Rainbow Six 3* and *SOCOM II U.S. Navy SEALs*. Poor sales contributed to the closure of developer Argonaut in 2004.

A ninth game in the series, *SWAT 4*, returned the series to its roots as a tactical police simulation for the PC in 2005.

SWAT: Global Strike Team



Developer	Argonaut Games
Publisher	Vivendi Universal Games[a]
Producer	Sefton Hill
Designer	Paul Crocker
Programmer	Matt Porter
Artist	Jean-François Vanelle
Writer	Mike Kitson
Composer	Nick Arundel
Series	*Police Quest*
Engine	OKRE[1]
Platforms	PlayStation 2, Xbox
Release	NA: October 28, 2003[2] EU: December 5, 2003[3]
Genre	Tactical shooter
Modes	Single-player, multiplayer

Synopsis

This is the first *Police Quest: SWAT* game not based on an actual police organization or present-day SWAT tactics. The game features non-white and female protagonists in deliberate contrast to the original *Police Quest* games, which were criticized for their sexist and racist overtones.[6]

Setting

Founded in 2008, the Global Strike Team is a fictional paramilitary law enforcement agency tasked with helping countries and organizations around the globe to resolve situations they cannot accomplish successfully on their own.

Plot

Former Delta Force member Mathias Kincaid is an element leader paired with two first lieutenants, a sniper named Kana Lee, and Anthony "TJ" Jackson, a field technician. Together, they take on a pair of rival narco-terrorist organizations, the Omega Cartel and the Whispering Dragon Clan, who are engaged in a bitter turf war over the production and distribution of a deadly new designer drug, LD-50 — nicknamed "Spike."

Gameplay

SWAT: Global Strike Team is a first-person shooter played with two AI teammates.

Unlike military shooters, such as the comparable *Rainbow Six* games, the player and teammates are cops rather than soldiers. A compliance meter shows how close suspects are to giving up. Before lethal force may be used, players must follow correct procedure, including using verbal commands for suspects to give up their weapons and submit to arrest.[7] Beyond that, *SWAT: Global Strike Team* is a significant departure from the *SWAT* series. It leaves many of the tactical simulation elements behind while simplifying others in favor of a much more straightforward action game experience.

Modes

SWAT: Global Strike Team is designed around one campaign mode with 21 linear story-based missions. A time-based game mode adds replayability, putting a time-limit on the campaign. Taking down enemies increases time on the clock. Multiplayer is limited. Both console versions include 10 unique co-op missions.[8] Xbox versions of the game include online leaderboard support and two single-player deathmatch levels which can be downloaded via Xbox Live.[9][10] Online support via Xbox Live was available to players until April 15, 2010. *SWAT: Global Strike Team* is now supported online on the replacement Xbox Live servers called Insignia.[11]

Characters

Most missions are played in the role of element leader Mathias Kincaid, assisted by the sniper Kana Lee and demolitions man "T.J." Jackson. Some essential tasks such as breaching doors or picking locks are character-specific. Occasionally, the player takes on these secondary roles. For example, the player will briefly control the sniper to clear out a landing zone. If any of the primary characters die, the mission is a failure and restarted from the last checkpoint.[12]

Loadout

The player chooses a loadout before each mission. The choices are straightforward, such as machine gun or shotgun, and include non-lethal options like flashbangs and tranquilizer darts. Unlike its predecessor, no real weapons or trademarks are used.

Development

SWAT: Global Strike Team started off as a top-down turn-based action game for the Dreamcast codenamed "Kleaners" where the player controlled a squad of professional killers. When Sega's console stalled in the market, development shifted to the Xbox where the game quickly moved towards being a first-person shooter with two semi-autonomous characters — a sharp-shooting assassin and a tech specialist able to hack security systems.[13]

The graphic engine was designed from the ground-up for the Xbox which gave "Kleaners" a distinct look and feel, including hard-edged shadows, allowing for an almost limitless number of lights and shadows in any given scene, and a photo-realistic film filter that gave the game a true-to-life look.[14]

Sierra took notice of the "Kleaners" demo at the Electronic Entertainment Expo in 2001 and soon thereafter, made a deal with Argonaut to make SWAT games for next-gen console systems based on the game concept.[15]

SWAT: Global Strike Team was formally announced as an Xbox exclusive in October 2001, riding the excitement in the weeks ahead of the system's launch.[14]

The game shone in early previews. "Graphically, *Global Strike Team* is surprisingly high-quality", said Brad Shoemaker of GameSpot. "The levels and character models themselves are pretty solid, and the visuals convey quite a bit of atmosphere thanks to a really impressive indoor and outdoor lighting effect."[16] The controls were well-tuned, with aiming and movement compared to the console first-person standard set by *Halo: Combat Evolved*.[17]

Voice command of AI teammates was touted as a major feature, intended to take advantage of the Xbox Live Communicator microphone that had become a popular accessory with the launch of Xbox Live in 2002.[18] Voice could be used to directly influence the action onscreen with shouted commands such as "SWAT! Get down!," intended to achieve a new level of realism and immersion or to replicate D-pad commands. *SWAT: Global Strike Team* and *Tom Clancy's Rainbow Six 3* were the first to ship with this feature which used the Xbox Development Kit's voice recognition technology added in 2003.[19]

Marketing

Promotion included the release of a *SWAT: Global Strike Team* mixtape from DJ Whoo Kid and Lloyd Banks in partnership with Sierra's parent Vivendi and Universal Music Group.[20]

Reception

Reception ranged from positive to mixed.[21][22] *GameSpot* gave the Xbox version of the game an 8.1 of 10, calling it "an impressive and successful effort to

Reception

bring the old series into the 21st century".[38] Other critics called the game as too little, too late amidst a field of tactical shooters that had become very crowded, very quickly. "*SWAT: Global Strike Team* was initially going to be a bit of a twist on the old squad-based tactical shooter genre", said *IGN*'s Aaron Boulding. "But in the time since it was announced for PS2 and Xbox and its recent arrival on those systems, other titles like *SOCOM* and *Rainbow Six 3* have surpassed and improved on what *SWAT: GST* set out to do."[39]

The launch of *SWAT: Global Strike Team* was misfortunately timed. *Tom Clancy's Rainbow Six 3* arrived the same day in North America and *SOCOM II U.S. Navy SEALs* launched the following week. Both received widespread critical acclaim and would set franchise records.[40] By the time *Counter-Strike* Xbox edition arrived in the Holiday 2003 release slot previously held by *Halo 2*,[41] *SWAT: Global Strike Team* was fading quickly from retail.

Aggregate score		
Aggregator	**Score**	
	PS2	**Xbox**
Metacritic	69/100[21]	69/100[22]

Review scores		
Publication	**Score**	
	PS2	**Xbox**
Edge	N/A	6/10[23]
Electronic Gaming Monthly	5/10[24]	5/10[24]
Eurogamer	6/10[25]	6/10[25]
Famitsu	N/A	28/40[26]
Game Informer	7/10[27]	7.5/10[28]
GamePro	3.5/5[29]	N/A
GameSpot	8.1/10[30]	8.1/10[30]
GameSpy	3/5[31]	3/5[32]
GameZone	7.5/10[33]	7/10[34]
IGN	6.6/10[35]	6.6/10[35]
Official U.S. PlayStation Magazine	3/5[36]	N/A
Official Xbox Magazine (US)	N/A	7.7/10[37]

In Japan, where the Xbox version was ported and published by Microsoft on December 16, 2004, *Famitsu* gave it a score of all four sevens for a total of 28 out of 40.[26]

Legacy

Argonaut Closure

Argonaut was under financial pressure during the development of *SWAT: Global Strike Team*. Much was staked on the game's success.[42] The poor sales of the game led to deepening losses,[43] which would ultimately prove unsustainable and contributed to the studio's closure in November 2004.[44]

SWAT: Urban Justice cancellation and *SWAT 4*

SWAT: Urban Justice was to be a PC-only *SWAT* game to launch in 2003.[45] Like *SWAT: Global Strike Team*, the game would be supported by a brand-new game engine and would have a faster, action-oriented pace. The poor reception to *SWAT: Global Strike Team* reduced confidence in the

project which was already suffering from internal delays. [46] The game was ultimately cancelled. The *SWAT* series would ultimately resume in 2005 with *SWAT 4* which used the same game engine as *Rainbow Six* and *Splinter Cell*, and was a more realistic law enforcement simulation.

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External links

- *SWAT: Global Strike Team* (https://www.mobygames.com/game//swat-global-strike-team) at MobyGames

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